

CLAIMS:

1. A method of manufacturing a multi-layered, striated, laminated, lipid-based sweet confection, having a first lipid-based layer and at least a second lipid-based layer, where each layer has at least a different color than each contiguous layer;

wherein each lipid-based layer is substantially solid at room temperature, and is formed of a lipid-based formulation having a tempering temperature in the range of 40°C to 90°C, whereat each respective lipid-based formulation has zero crystallization regions;

said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) tempering the lipid-based formulation of the first layer, and spreading the tempered formulation at a first position onto a moving conveyor belt arranged to be moved through a cooling tunnel;
- (b) at a second position near said first position where step (a) is carried out, passing said spread lipid-based formulation on said conveyor belt through openings in a first plurality of fingers which contact said conveyor belt, so as to striate said spread lipid-based formulation into a plurality of ribbons; where the center-to-center distance between each adjacent pair of fingers is fixed, and where each finger has a first predetermined width;
- (c) tempering the lipid-based formulation of the second layer, and spreading the tempered formulation over the plurality of ribbons of said first layer at a third position that is sufficiently far along said cooling tunnel from said second position that said lipid-based formulation of said first layer will at least have begun to crystallize;
- (d) passing said first and second layers of said lipid-based formulations on said conveyor belt through openings in a second plurality of fingers which contact said conveyor belt, where the center-to-center distance between each adjacent pair of fingers is said fixed distance, and where each finger has a second

predetermined width, where said second predetermined width is not greater than said first predetermined width; whereby the width of each ribbon of lipid-based sweet confection having two layers is at least as wide as the width of each ribbon following step (b); and

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- (e) continuing to move said striated and layered ribbons on said moving conveyor belt through said cooling tunnel so as to continue to crystallize said lipid-based formulations to a temperature below 25°C.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the multi-layered, laminated, lipid-based sweet confection has at least three layers, where each layer has at least a different color than each contiguous layer, and wherein said method further comprises the step of:

- (f) before step (e), repeating steps (c) and (d) for each successive layer after the second layer, wherein the predetermined width of each finger of each successive plurality of fingers is not greater than the width of each finger in the immediately preceding plurality of fingers.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein each layer has a different color and a different flavor than each contiguous layer.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the layers of said multi-layered, laminated, lipid-based sweet confection is chocolate.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the lipid-based formulation of at least one of said at least two layers is formed by mixing a color syrup additive with said tempered lipid-based formulation for said at least one layer.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein said color syrup additive is mixed with said tempered lipid-based formulation for said second layer as a part of step (c), prior to spreading the tempered formulation over the plurality of ribbons of said first layer.
7. The method of claim 5 where said mixing step for said color syrup additive comprises the steps of:
- (f) feeding said tempered lipid-based formulation for said at least one layer through a feed tube into a mixer; and
 - (g) injecting predetermined discrete quantities of said color syrup additive into said tempered lipid-based formulation by depositing said discrete quantities into the center of said feed tube as said tempered lipid-based formulation moves therethrough towards said mixer.
8. The method of claim 5, wherein said color syrup additive imparts both color and flavor to said lipid-based formulation of said at least one layer.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein said tempered formulation of said second layer is spread over said plurality of ribbons by being dispensed from a plurality of dispensing nozzles which are located over said plurality of ribbons, and which are spaced apart by a center-to-center distance equal to said fixed distance.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein the cooling effect of said cooling tunnel is effected at least in part by cooling said moving conveyor belt from the bottom side thereof.
11. The method of claim 1, wherein the cooling effect of said cooling tunnel is

effected at least in part by pumping cool air therethrough, in the same direction as the direction of movement of said moving conveyor belt.

12. A mixer for mixing a color syrup additive to a tempered, lipid-based formulation, wherein said mixer comprises a mixing body within which said color syrup additive is thoroughly mixed with said tempered, lipid-based formulation, and a feed tube and an outlet tube leading into and away from said mixing body, respectively;

5 a cyclically operating pump connected to a reservoir for said color syrup additive, and an injection port located in said feed tube in a position so as to deposit discrete quantities of said color syrup additive into the center of said feed tube while said tempered, lipid-based formulation flows therethrough;

10 whereby a plurality of spaced apart discrete quantities of said color syrup additive are axially located in said flowing lipid-based formulation as it enters said mixing body through said feed tube; and

whereby said lipid-based formulation is evenly colored by said color syrup additive as it exits said mixing body at said outlet tube.

13. The mixer of claim 12, wherein said mixing body is cylindrical, and comprises a plurality of fingers directed radially inwardly from the circumference thereof, and a plurality of interposed circular discs each having a diameter less than the diameter of the mixing body mounted axially along the length of the mixing body.

14. The mixer of claim 12, wherein said mixing body is a jacketed ribbon blender.

15. The mixer of claim 11, wherein said cyclically operating pump is a proportional pump.